

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01615 211719Z

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 211509Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO USIA WASHDC

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USIA FOR IWE/GAWRONSKI

E.O. 11652: N/A

REF: CONLEY/GILDNER O-I OF 11/27/74

1. WE CANNOT STRESS TOO HIGHLY IMPORTANCE OF OBTAINING POSITIONS FOR CAO AND TWO LOCALS. PRESS ATTACKS ON USG HAVE INCREASED CONSIDERABLY RECENTLY TO EXTENT THAT OVERWHELMING SHARE OF TIME OF COMPLEMENT OF USIS OFFICERS HAS BEEN DEDICATED TO PRESS ACTIVITY, LEAVING CULTURAL AND OTHER PROGRAM MATTERS PERFORCE TO ONE SIDE. WORKLOAD ON LOCAL EMPLOYEES IN PRESS SECTION HAS TRIPLED IN RECENT WEEKS ALONE AS A RESULT OF COUNTLESS INFLAMMATORY ATTACKS ON USG AND AMBASSADOR BY LOCAL MEDIA, ATTACKS, BY THE WAY, THAT WE DO NOT SEE AS ABATING. ONE OF TWO REQUESTED LOCAL POSITIONS IS REQUIRED AS TRANSLATOR/MONITOR/INTERPRETER JUST TO HANDLE USIS ACTIVITY IN THIS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT AREA.

2. IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG AND VIABLE U.S. CULTURAL INITIATIVE BECOMES MORE APPARENT DAILY AS PORTUGUESE, SO LONG DENIED OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE CULTURAL OFFERINGS FROM EASTERN EUROPE, ARE RAPIDLY MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME. BY NO MEANS DO WE IMPLY THAT OUR EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION SHOULD BE ON ONE-FOR-ONE BASIS WITH COMMUNIST CULTURAL EXTRAVAGANZAS. NEVERTHELESS, THE RECORD SHOULD SHOW THAT BLOC COUNTRY CULTURAL ACTIVITY IN RECENT MONTHS HAS BEEN AS APPEALING AND SPECTACULAR AS IT HAS BEEN FREQUENT. THERE ARE MANY PORTUGUESE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS WITH WHICH THE EMBASSY CAN AND

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PAGE 02 LISBON 01615 211719Z

SHOULD COOPERATE. WITH APPROACHING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND

AFTERMATH NO LETUP IS IN SIGHT FOR PRESENT FEVERISH USIS ACTIVITY.
HIGH PERCENT OF PAO TIME ALREADY GOES TOWARD HANDLING EDUCATIONAL
EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES AND NOW WITH LIKELIHOOD OF INCREASED ACTIVITY
IN THIS FIELD PROPORTION WOULD BE EVEN GREATER.

3. ONLY WITH ADDITION OF CAO AND TWO LOCAL POSITIONS WOULD PAO
BE FREE TO GIVE OVERALL DIRECTION TO MISSION OBJECTIVES WITHOUT
SLIGHTING MUCH-NEEDED CULTURAL EFFORT.

4. AMBASSADOR SHARES VIEW THAT INCREASE IN U.S. CULTURAL EFFORT
AND PRESENCE IS VERY HIGH PRIORITY AND STRONGLY URGES APPROVAL
OF CAO AND TWO LOCAL SLOTS.

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